

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-02 SP-02 /027 W

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R 011854Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO USINFO WASHDC
USCINCEUR-ECAP VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE
SECSTATE WASHDC 3649
USIA WASHDC
INFO USMISSION USNATO

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 02230

SECSTATE FOR EUR/WE; EUR/RPM
USIA FOR IOP/F

SUBJECT: PRESS ON US RELATIONSHIP TO OAU CANARIES
- DECLARATION

1. MADRID PRESS COMMENTARY ON OAU CALL FOR
"LIBERATION" OF CANARY ISLANDS FROM SPAIN HAS
EXTENDED TO INCLUDE VARIETY OF SPECULATIONS
ON SUPPOSED U.S. INTERESTS IN THIS AFFAIR.
CRONOLOGICALLY, THE STORY DEVELOPS THUS:

2. FEBRUARY 27: ABEL HERNANDEZ WRITES IN
INFORMACIONES (CENTRIST): "THE TREATIES OF
FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED
STATES AND SPAIN HAVEN'T BEEN WORTH ANYTHING.
OUR AMERICAN ALLY HASN'T MOVED A FINGER OR SAID
A WORD TO IMPEDE THE AFRICAN INSULT TO THE
SPANISH CANARIES. A WARNING BY THE STATE
DEPARTMENT TO BUMEDIEN...WOULD HAVE BEEN ENOUGH.
THERE IS BASIS TO SUSPECT WASHINGTON COMPLICITY

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IN THE TRIPOLI RESOLUTION. ACCORDING TO SPANISH
DIPLOMATIC SOURCES, THE UNITED STATES HAS USED
THIS OPPORTUNITY TO PRESS FOR THE NECESSITY FOR
SPANISH ENTRY INTO NATO...AN IMPORTANT SOVIET
SOURCE RECENTLY TOLD A SPANISH POLITICIAN THAT
EVERYTHING WAS 'PROGRAMMED' AND THAT LATIN
EUROPE - FRANCE, ITALY, PORTUGAL AND SPAIN -

WOULD ENTER THE SOCIALIST ORBIT..."

3. FEBRUARY 28: ANTONIO PARRA WRITES FROM NEW YORK FOR ARRIBA (GOVERNMENT ORIENTED): "THE CANARY ISLANDS ARE AN INALIENABLE PART OF SPANISH TERRITORY,' ANNOUNCED A STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN YESTERDAY MORNING...THE STATE DEPARTMENT TODAY, IT SEEMS TO US, WANTS TO COME OUT IN FAVOR OF SPAIN. AND IN TRUTH, THIS WAS HONESTLY DONE."

4. EL PAIS (INDEPENDENT LIBERAL LEFT) REPORTS: "FURTHERMORE, IN SPANISH DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES THERE IS GROWING A PREOCCUPATION ABOUT THE ATTITUDES OF THE GREAT POWERS, THE U.S. AND THE USSR, OVER THE CANARIES DEBATE..." INFORMACIONES NOTES STATE DEPARTMENT STATEMENT BUT ADDS: "HOWEVER, THE SPOKESMAN DECLINED TO GIVE AN OPINION ABOUT THE CONCRETE TEXT OF THE OAU ABOUT THE CANARIES."

5. MARCH 1: EL PAIS FRONT PAGE: "FURTHERMORE, THE U.S. EMBASSY IN MADRID HAS DECLARED THAT THE UNITED STATES CONSIDERS THE CANARY ISLANDS AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF SPAIN, WHILE THE PSOE DEPUTY AND DEFENSE EXPERT, LUIS SOLANA, ACCUSED THE UNCLASSIFIED

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UNITED STATES OF PUTTING PRESSURE ON THE PSOE OVER THE CANARIES TOPIC SO THAT IT (PSOE) WOULD ACCEPT THE ENTRY OF SPAIN INTO NATO." EL PAIS CONTINUES ON INSIDE PAGE: "THE UNITED STATE EMBASSY IN MADRID HAS OFFICIALLY INFORMED EL PAIS THAT THE UNITED STATE HAS ALWAYS VIEWED, AND CONTINUES TO VIEW, THE CANNARY ISLANDS AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF SPAIN'...ON THIS SAME SUBJECT, PSOE FIRST SECRETARY FELIPE GONZALEZ DECLARED...THAT ANY SOLUTION TO THE CURRENT CRISIS MUST COME THROUGH A SERIOUS PENETRATION OF SPANISH POLICY IN AFRICA, ACCOMPANIED BY A FORMAL EXPLANATION TO THE AFRICAN COUNTRIES 'OF THE INTERESTS THAT ARE AT PLAY AND OF THE INTERESTS THAT THEY ARE REALLY SERVING WITH THEIR INITIATIVES.' FURTHERMORE, LUIS SOLANA... DECLARED THAT THE CURRENT CRISIS COULD BE MANIPULATED BY WASHINGTON, WITH THE APPARENT INTENT OF BLACKMAILING SPANISH

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POLITICAL FORCES, SPECIFICALLY PSOE, INTO ACCEPTING
THE ENTRY OF SPAIN INTO NATO..." SOLANA, WHO IN
COMPANY OF ENRIQUE MUGICA WILL TRAVEL TO THE
UNITED STATES NEXT SUNDAY AS PSOE MEMBER
RESPONSIBLE FOR DEFENSE AFFAIRS TO TALK TO HIGH
PENTAGON OFFICIALS, ADDED THAT 'IN THE CANARIES
THERE IS BEING PRODUCED A PILING UP OF OPPOSED--N-
TERESTS BASED UPON ITS CONSIDERATION AS A
SUPERBASE ANCHORED IN THE ATLANTIC, TO THE POINT
OF BEING CONSIDERED AS ESPIONAGE CENTER FOR THE
GREAT POWERS, WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE
GOVERNMENT IN MADRID.'"

6. ABEL HERNANDEZ IN INFORMACIONES SPEAKS OF
THE POSSIBILITY THAT "SPAIN COULD PLAY THE CUBAN
CONNECTION IN AFRICA. THE INFLUENCE OF FIDEL
CASTRO WITH THE PROGRESSIVE GOVERNMENTS IN THE
BLACK CONTINENT COULD BE DECISIVE FOR HALTING
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IN THE SUMMIT CONFERENCE OF THE OAU...THE INSULT
OF TRIPOLI AGAINST THE CANARIES. IN THESE

MOMENTS CASTRO HAS IN AFRICA THIRTY SIX THOUSAND MEN. HIS FRIENDSHIP WITH SPAIN, MAINTAINED EVEN DURING THE DICTATORSHIP, IS SOLID. PROBABLY THERE COULD NOT BE FOUND A BETTER MEDIATOR... IN THIS AFFAIR, FULL DISCRETION IS ESSENTIAL. SPANISH DIPLOMATIC SOURCES HAVE SPOKEN TO US OF A 'WORKING HYPOTHESIS' WHILE CUBAN DIPLOMATS INDICATE THAT IT IS A 'MERE SPECULATION'... CASTRO UNDERSTANDS PERFECTLY THAT CUTTING THE CANARIES FROM SPAIN WOULD BE SENSELESS AND A MONSTROSITY..."

7. FELIX ORTEGA WRITES IN ARRIBA: "IT HAS BEEN NOTED WITH INEXPLICABLE INDIGNATION THAT WASHINGTON AND NATO WASH THEIR HANDS OF THE AFFAIR. ONE SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED, BECAUSE THE SITUATION WORKS TO THEIR FAVOR." ORTEGA THEN QUOTES THE ATLANTIC COUNCIL STATEMENT ON THE POSSIBLE UTILITY OF THE CANARIES AS A NATO FACILITY. HE CONTINUES: "THE SOLUTION IS TO NOT AFFILIATE THE CANARIES TO ANY BLOC. THIS WOULD MEAN THE AUTOMATIC DESTABILIZING ENTRY OF THE OTHER INTO THE GAME. THE SOLUTION IS A RAPID AUTONOMIZATION OF THE CANARIES WITH THE FORMAL PLEDGE TO ABSTAIN FROM ESTABLISHING NON-SPANISH BASES THERE."

8. DIARIO 16 (LEFT SENSATIONALIST) ALSO REPORTS THE STATE DEPARTMENT STATEMENT, ADDING IN THE SAME ARTICLE THE STATEMENTS BY SOLANA QUOTED ABOVE. YA (CATHOLIC CENTRIST) BRIEFLY REPORTS UNCLASSIFIED

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THE U.S. STATEMENT ON ITS FRONT PAGE. RYLANCE

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